Applied social psychology, 7,5 credits

Master’s program in psychology, HT21, Psychology department, Stockholm University

Course leader: Marie Gustafsson Sendén
Course content

The aim of the course is to provide deepened social psychological knowledge that pertains to applied social psychology. It focuses on understanding social problems and developing skills to design and evaluation interventions that improve conditions for individuals, groups and societies. The course brings up applied social psychological theories, methods and empirical findings, but also theories from the wider social psychological area, used for specific applied purposes. In addition, the course provides opportunity for elaboration within different applied subareas.

Expected study results

To pass the course, the student will:

- understand an give an account of and employ applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings on issues and questions that are relevant for the subject area
- value and discuss strengths and weaknesses with different applied social psychological theories, models and empirical findings
- assimilate advanced literature in the form of scientific articles and show an elaborated understanding for applied theoretical and methodological issues and questions

Educational activities and course requirements/mandatory parts

The course consists of lectures and seminars.

Course requirements/Mandatory parts

(a) Written answers to seminar questions before the seminars
(b) Participation in oral group discussion and presentation of seminar questions at the seminars
(c) Written elaboration task as well as written reviews (formative evaluations) of other students’ elaboration tasks

Students who do not pass (a) above will be offered the possibility to submit written complementary task. An extra presentation seminar or individual presentation for the course leader will be offered to students who does not pass (b) above. Regarding (c), see below.

Knowledge control and examination

The examination is based on written seminar questions that are handed in before each seminar, oral seminar presentations, written elaboration paper with attached formative evaluations of other students’ elaboration papers.

The course grade is based on the individual elaboration paper and marked with a seven-point goal-related grading scale: A (Outstanding), B (Excellent), C (Good), D (Satisfactory), E (Sufficient), Fx (Insufficient), F (Totally insufficient). The written grading criteria are provided at the beginning of the course. Passing the course requires (1) grade E or a higher grade on the individual written elaboration paper, (2) Pass on the written seminar questions, (3) Pass on the oral seminar presentations, and (4) Pass on the reviews of other student’s elaboration tasks. The possibility of supplementing the grade Fx up to a maximum of an E grade is given on this course. The written individual elaboration paper is evaluated on different aspects: fulfilling of instructions (see below), submission on first date, use of scientific literature and their scientific quality, the question
formulation, the processing of the question formulation, scientific support, conclusions as well as
general evaluation (coherence etc). The written individual elaboration paper can result in a maximum
of 70 points.

Seminars
Before each seminar, each student should individually formulate and answer two questions which
can be discussed at the seminar. The participants base their questions on the current seminar
literature. A good idea is to mix the types of questions throughout using for instance both
discursive/analytical questions and descriptive ones. The two questions should connect to two
different scientific sources and include 200-400 words (references excluded). Submit the tasks
through Athena by the dates and times specified in the schedule. Please use the text window for this
(and do not upload a file). Make sure your own name and the full reference to current article is stated
clearly at the top of the page. There are four (4) seminars in the course.

Failure to submit the seminar questions on time or failure to follow instructions require the student
to complete a complementary task. This task includes specific questions which can be retrieved after
each seminar. Please contact the course leader if applicable.

Individual elaboration paper
The individual elaboration task consists of relating social psychology theory and/or empirical findings
included in this course to existing research in some (possibly other) area of interest. The paper
should be a theoretical discussion text. If the paper is related to ongoing projects where the student
is hired, it should be noted that empirical results that are not published shall not be included, and the
paper shall not contain any data collection. More specific, the participant shall individually formulate
one own applied social psychological question which shall be described in the first paragraph of
the paper. The question should be associated with at least one of the four areas included in the
course: (1) diversity, (2) the environment, (3) learning or (4) the legal context. You may associate
your question with the topic of interventions. Please make sure to state your question as clearly as
possible.

The written elaboration task should be saved in word format (not pdf or any other format for
instance pages):

APA style

Length: 3500 to 4500 words (excluding title page, abstract, and reference list).

Font: Calibri or Times New Roman 12p, double spacing (2.0).

Format: Include headings, abstract (max 150 words) and references.

Reference to 6-9 scientific peer-review articles:

- 2 from the articles included in the course (no more no less)
- A minimum of 4-7 articles of relevance based on the research topic (more references can be
  included if needed)
- At least 1 chapter from the course book.
- Indirect/secondary references at a minimum (max 2), besides the articles included above.
At the end of the text there shall be a reference list. References (both in the body of text and in the reference list) shall be in APA-format.

The paper should be uploaded on the course web Athena by the date and time specified in the schedule. The paper will go through an automatic plagiarism check. The uploaded version of the paper is then graded after the closing of the deadline. No changes can then be made to the text. Any deviation from instructions will render a reduction of points. Note that the task will be graded as Fx, if it has been submitted after the deadline, if it does not meet requirements regarding the references (see above), if it does not meet requirements regarding word limitation and/or if it does not pass the plagiarism check.

Each student will get feedback on their paper from two peer student(s) on two separate occasions. The specific contents of this feedback, to what extent it is grounded in aspects regarding the examination and to what extent the recipient should make revisions according to it will not be regulated by the course leader. The task of the peer formative evaluator is not to say whether a paper may or may not pass, although they can choose to point out aspects of the text that align with or depart from instructions. The course leader will not provide any feedback or tutoring because the individual elaboration paper is an examination task. The deadline for submission of the final paper is published on Athena. Please note that positive response from a peer does not indicate a grading. In your feedback toward each other, please be as constructive as possible and also in relation to the learning goals and scientific writing.

Later deadlines for submission of a revised version of the paper or a completely new paper (so called “omtentamen”) will be appointed to students that missed the deadline or when the paper was graded Fx. When a Fx-paper is revised and submitted again it can receive a maximum of a grade E. A completely new paper has the possibility to receive a higher grade than a grade E. However, to be considered a completely new paper, there must be a completely different research question as a starting point, different areas of research and most likely different scientific sources. If in doubt, please contact the course leader before committing to a new discussion question.

There will be two deadlines for submission of a revised/completely new paper (omtentamen). Dates are announced on Athena.

**Formative evaluations**

Each participant will contribute to their peers’ drafts, as an evaluator/reviewer at two separate occasions by reading and commenting. Each participant shall submit their comments on Athena by the times/dates specified in the schedule.

The first formative evaluation is scheduled at the beginning of the course, making possible to receive comments on a text in the beginning. At this time, the individual elaboration paper has not to be finished when it is submitted on Athena. However, the text requires a minimum to evaluate. This includes one or a few discussion questions (presented to be comprehensible to a reader), a short text describing the background to the question(s) and, if several questions are described, there should be a paragraph describing thoughts and considerations on the choice between them. If the draft lacks any of the intended sections, it should include a paragraph describing how the author will progress. Please do not include large quotes from readings (such as abstracts), passages that are made up by key-words or the like, but make sure that whatever text is submitted, is readable even if
it is in its early stages. Regard this stage as an opportunity to get feedback from the evaluator, and as such that person needs information about what the author is deliberating or planning for. Thus, make sure the text is not too short and non-specific.

For the second formative evaluation, the submitted individual elaboration draft should exhibit a marked progression relative the first submitted draft. It might be helpful to make sure that the text in some way exhibits how the comments to the first draft have been approached in order to show progression, for instance through inserted comments. At this point in time, the evaluation is likely based on a more “final” product.

A guideline for reviewers can be found on Athena. It is composed of aspects included in the grading as well as aspects that a reviewer for a scientific journal often use.

**Plagiarism, cheating and unallowed cooperation**

As a student to need to be aware of the examination rules at Stockholm University. Detailed information is available both at the web pages of the Department of Psychology and Stockholm University (see links at Athena). Teachers are obliged to report suspicion about cheating and plagiarism to the principle and the disciplinary board. Plagiarism and cheating are always disciplinary matters and can lead to shutting off from studies. One example of plagiarism is to verbatim (word-by-word) or almost verbatim – regardless if a source has been given – copy a text (also concerns occasional sentences) and not refer to the source of the text. This also concerns texts that you have yourself authored previously (self-plagiarism, although not work in progress). In exams, you are not allowed to bring or use resources such as a cell phone. To be involved in study groups is developing and time efficient, but when it comes to examination tasks you will need make sure that you are working on your own (if nothing else is instructed).

**Literature**


A list of scientific articles will be published on Athena at the beginning of the course. These are course literature especially for the seminars and your written task.

**Course leader**

Marie Gustafsson Sendén, PhD, Associate professor, mgu@psychology.su.se, room xxx (), phone 08 – xxxxxx.

**Lecturers and seminar leaders**

- Marie Gustafsson Sendén, PhD, Associate professor
- Petri Laukka, PhD, Professor
- Torun Lindholm, PhD, Professor
- Charlotte Alm, PhD, Associate professor

**Course administrator**

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